

**City of Cincinnati**  
**Human Services Policy**

Adopted by City Council

October 16, 2002

## ***Table of Contents***

<b>I. Forward</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. History</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>III. Policy Recommendations</b>	<b>3</b>
A. Principles	<b>3-4</b>
B. Funding Criteria	<b>4-5</b>
C. Program Design and Implementation Priorities	<b>5-7</b>
D. Programs and Services that are Ineligible for Human Services Policy Grant Funds	<b>7</b>
<b>IV. Implementation Strategies</b>	<b>8</b>
A. City of Cincinnati Human Services Advisory Committee	<b>8</b>
B. Department of Community Development and Planning	<b>8-9</b>
C. Pre-application Procedures	<b>9-10</b>
D. Grant Application Process	<b>10</b>
E. Grant Application Review Process Timetable	<b>11</b>
F. Funding Allocation	<b>11-12</b>

## **I. Forward**

The complexity of modern urban life indicates that many citizens require services beyond those traditionally offered by local government. The number of human needs which cities feel obligated to fulfill has increased. The growing complexity and sophistication of cities and the increasing poverty rate have created needs that did not previously exist. Cities have acknowledged that citizens need more than the traditional services of safety, peacekeeping, and sanitation. Thus, City government's functions have increased steadily to include a myriad of non-traditional services.

While these services are enumerated and classified in various ways, they are generally known as human services. For purposes of clarification, human services may be defined in the following manner:

Human Services are those services provided directly to individuals or families experiencing difficulty in meeting their basic human needs: for physical survival (e.g., food, shelter, clothing, maintenance of minimum income); for adequate preparation for and help in sustaining gainful employment (e.g., employment and training programs, child care); for social support and interaction, especially in times of personal or family crisis (e.g., social services, counseling); for assistance in overcoming specific pathologies (e.g., health, mental health, physical abuse, and substance abuse treatment programs); and for help in gaining access to available, appropriate services ( e.g., transportation, information, and referral service). These services may be either preventive or remedial in nature, but are to be delivered in such away that recipients of the services are not rendered unnecessarily dependent on the services, but rather are helped to achieve the greatest possible level of independence and self-determination. Services may be targeted geographically, by age group, or by specific condition of impairment.

The City of Cincinnati has encouraged the provision of human services and continues to support such services in a variety of ways: as a direct provider of services in health, recreation, consumer protection, safety, youth services, and employment and training; as a funder of services provided by other non-City agencies; and as a facilitator of services between citizens and human service agencies.

While city government's role has changed over time, reflecting changing needs and realities, actual practice clearly indicates that the City is committed to seeing that services are made available to its citizens.

## II. History

Historically, most human services were supported by categorical grants. However, this support has decreased with greater reliance being placed in local government to support the services. Recognizing the difficulty facing the City in view of reduced federal and state funding support, the City Administration identified human services policy development as a priority in 1981.

Therefore, the City Manager established the Human Services Committee consisting of fifteen (15) community volunteers and agency representatives. The committee was directed to:

1. Inventory and analyze existing human services and funding sources.
2. Develop human services policies based upon the needs of the City that legitimately should be the responsibility of City government.

Its recommendations were limited to the human services efforts of the Human Services Division (now the Department of Community Development and Planning (DCDP)). The 1981 Human Services Policy made recommendations in the areas of principles, funding criteria, priorities, implementation strategies, management and performance standards, and service definitions. The Policy was adopted by City Council in 1982. The City Manager appointed a Human Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) to implement the Human Services Policy.

In 1991, the HSAC developed a new Framework for Human Services Division Grants to reflect changing conditions in the community and changes in funding mechanisms and methods for providing human services. The Framework provides information regarding the review of grant applications, requests for grant increases, human services policy priorities, funding criteria, and a rationale for priority ranking.

In 1997, the HSAC concluded that conditions in the community had changed substantially since the original Human Services Policy and the 1991 Framework were adopted, as had social programs, types of funding mechanisms, and the priorities of many human service funders. Therefore, the City of Cincinnati's Department of Neighborhood Services and the HSAC determined in late 1997 that a review and analysis of the City's Human Services Policy, including the policy, priorities, and grant decision-making process, were necessary.

Following a Request for Proposals and interviews of consultants, the Department of Neighborhood Services (DNS) and HSAC selected local consultants to review and analyze the Policy, its priorities, and the decision-making process for awarding grant funds for human services delivery. During a spring 1999 retreat, the HSAC reviewed the mission, purpose, and guiding principles of the City's Human Services Policy, HSAC's Bylaws, and the findings and recommendations of the consultant's study. Subsequently, a new Human Services Policy was developed.

The HSAC believed that the new Human Services Policy accomplished the following purposes:

- (1) It recommended priority areas for the distribution of City of Cincinnati funds for the delivery of human services and
- (2) it recommended a mechanism by which clear funding decisions could be made and through which the HSAC can be further assured that the City-funded services were being delivered effectively.

The Human Services Policy of 1981 provided a rational process and procedure for making grant award recommendations for human service contracting. The Human Services Policy of 1999 also provided a process and procedure for making recommendations regarding human service contracting.

In 2002, the City Council for the City of Cincinnati determined to revise the Human Services Policy to make Senior Centers eligible to apply for Human Services Funds and eligible for funding consideration. The Human Services Policy, as revised, presents Policy Recommendations and Implementation strategies.

### **III. Policy Recommendations**

#### **A. Principles**

1. The City of Cincinnati shall continuously seek to assure that adequate levels of appropriate human services are made available to the people of Cincinnati. This will require coordination of the services provided by the various departments, as well as ongoing communication, planning, and working with a variety of public and voluntary organizations, such as county, state, and federal government, United Way and Community Chest, churches, and community organizations.
2. The means by which the City seeks to assure the availability of needed human services shall include:
  - a. Encouraging the delivery of appropriate services when there exists some organization(s), public or private, which can both deliver and underwrite the cost of such services.
  - b. Providing public funds, whether from the general fund or some other source, to organizations, which can deliver human services, judged by City government to be needed by the people of Cincinnati.
  - c. Entering into contractual partnerships with nonprofit agencies to ensure the delivery of essential human services.
3. City government shall involve citizens to the greatest possible degree in human services needs assessment, planning, decision-making, delivery, monitoring, and evaluating processes.
4. Either independently or in concert with other public or private organizations, the City shall assess needs, plan, and monitor the effectiveness of the City's efforts in funding human services.
5. The City shall encourage the coordination of social programs with physical development activities including planning, construction, and the use of facilities for human services.

6. The City shall take a leadership role in efforts to improve and coordinate human services. As an advocate for human services the City shall:
- Meet regularly with and convene meetings with the primary funders of human services throughout the County
  - In partnership with other funders, identify and execute needed legislative and study Initiatives to ensure appropriate flexibility to meet the needs of human services customers during changing times
  - Encourage appropriate consolidation, collaboration, and mix of priorities to ensure necessary service coverage and cooperation between funders and service providers
  - Encourage agencies to make necessary operational changes and increase capacity growth to ensure client-based delivery of services
  - Investigate shared applications, reporting, and evaluation formats with other local funders
  - Identify and pursue outside funding sources for governmental agencies (e.g., Federal and State) and provide assistance to agencies in identifying and pursuing non-City funding sources (e.g., Federal, State, foundation, corporate, and private)
  - Encourage periodic dialogues for leadership of civic, religious, and business leaders together with key funders and providers to address the current state of Cincinnati as it relates to human services, social indicators, and needs of the City.

## **B. Funding Criteria**

The Human Services Policy shall provide a program of balanced services. Funding shall not be based solely on priorities, but also on severity or urgency of the problem. The Priorities are not intended to, and do not prohibit funding for Senior Centers. Senior Centers are eligible to apply for funding and are eligible for funding consideration.

**The priorities for Human Services Grant Programs are as follows:**

### **1. Emergency Services and Homeless Services**

Emergency services are defined as services that provide needed material assistance (short term), assistance with transportation, assistance accessing public benefits for individuals or families during a period of crisis, and efforts to move such individuals toward self-sufficiency.

Homeless services are defined as services that provide temporary or transitional shelter with supportive services to homeless individuals and families in general or for specific populations. Supportive programs could include an array of essential or preventive services that lead to (result in) permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

This category includes transitional housing, homeless shelters, and services that prevent homelessness.

## **2. Youth Services Focused on Providing Valuable Experiences.**

Services for youth are defined as those services that are preventive in nature for younger children and focused on enabling youth ages 12 -24 years to develop decision-making and leadership skills. Such services would emphasize the value of education, postponing sexual involvement for both males and females, and the value of an individual's contribution.

## **3. Realignment & Innovation.**

Realignment of existing services under the revised Human Services Policy will enable the City to meet critical human services needs (e.g., provision of child care to infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities, as well as traditional hours of day care, and Senior Centers, particularly those serving high-poverty, high-senior citizen areas or special populations). Added costs to provide services on weekends or before and after 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., as well as costs to provide continuing after care for other types of services, would fall under this priority.

This category exists to fund emerging needs and encourage the development of creative ways to fund services related to current needs. This priority can apply to any program or service category, including those not on this list, but clear data supporting the need for realignment or innovation must be documented.

## **4. Disabilities**

Physical disabilities, especially those among seniors, drug and alcohol abuse, AIDS, and mental illness are included in this priority. This category includes providing activities to individuals with disabilities to assist in their adjustment to the norms and values of society, substance abuse prevention, and treatment. Combining disabilities into one priority, rather than spreading them among ages or other categories, will bring attention to these needs.

## **C. Program Design and Implementation Priorities**

1. Programs should primarily benefit low-and moderate-income individuals, families, and communities in the City of Cincinnati. Those services operated on a County or regional basis must show documentation that their services benefit City residents and that sufficient funds are available from non-city sources to support non-city residents.

2. Programs must address specific social needs and conditions of the communities or consumers they propose to serve. Documentation should include social indicators, demographic data, survey findings, community plan recommendations, and service needs as perceived by potential consumers.
3. Community-based programs should demonstrate that residents are aware of and benefit from the proposed service(s) and are actively involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating the proposed service(s.) The applicant should also demonstrate how a community might benefit from having access to the agency's resources.
4. Proposals should identify all funding sources. Proposed services should not duplicate services being successfully offered by other agencies in the same community.
5. Human Services Policy funds will be used primarily for direct services. Consideration should be given to under-served geographic areas and target groups, which have a documented lack of services or limited services.
6. Human Services Policy funds will not be used to deliver or fund services that are the legal responsibility of other City departments or public agencies.
7. The City shall use its funds to primarily leverage other funds from other public and private sector human services funders. In the event that other funds are withdrawn, the City will not be committed to total support of the program. In situations where the City is the only funder of a program, the applicant must demonstrate its ability to carry out a fund-raising strategy. In addition, the City may use its funds as seed money for new and innovative services, which meet emerging needs and have no available funding source. However, the focus on new and innovative services is not intended to and will not prohibit the City from providing Human Services Funds to traditional programs that have a demonstrated ability to provide eligible services.
8. All funding applications shall also be reviewed to determine ways in which the proposed or existing service incorporates the following criteria:
  - a. Use of existing assets (facilities)
  - b. Coordination and cooperation among services, programs, and agencies
  - c. Neighborhood and family empowerment (client/consumer driven, encouraging potential for incorporation with neighborhood revitalization efforts)
  - d. Continuation of care after completion of every program, when appropriate
  - e. Measurable and well-defined outcomes and assurance that outcomes are being met.

The City shall also consider and incorporate the above criteria in developing and implementing City-initiated human services programs.



9. The City may provide funds for capital improvements, rehabilitation, and renovation of facilities for human services used in accordance with the criteria established previously by the Human Services Advisory Committee and the Community Development Advisory Board (CDAB).

**D. Programs and Services That Are Ineligible to Receive Human Services Policy Grant Funds**

The following types of programs and services are not considered eligible to receive a Human Services Policy funds.

1. **Formal Academic Education programs** are the responsibility of the Cincinnati Board of Education.
2. **Employment and Training programs** are assigned to the City's Workforce Development Division and to the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services operated by the State. Programs funded by the federal or state government but operated locally shall remain the responsibility of the federal or state government.
3. **Mental Retardation programs** are the responsibility of the Mental Retardation and Developmental Disability Board. Comparable State departments also have responsibility for residential and rehabilitation care.
5. **Housing rehabilitation and development programs** are the responsibilities of the Department of Community Development and Planning.
6. **Recreation programs** are the responsibility of the Cincinnati Recreation Commission. Services may include the operation of community centers and senior citizen recreation programs.
7. **The provision of parks** is the responsibility of the City Department of Parks.
8. **Transportation related expenses** (e.g., vehicular leasing or acquisition, gas, repair, maintenance, licenses, driver salaries, etc.) are not eligible, with the exception of mileage.

## **IV. Implementation Strategies**

**A. The City of Cincinnati Human Services Advisory Committee (HSAC)**

The City of Cincinnati Human Services Advisory Committee provides assistance to the City's Department of Community Development and Planning in the planning, development, and implementation of City funded human services programs and projects.

It is composed of persons who are knowledgeable of human services issues, needs assessment, program evaluation, and service delivery strategies. The HSAC also includes service providers, clients, and representatives of the business community. Committee members should be familiar with other human services funders and service delivery systems in the community.

Public hearings are an integral part of the needs assessment and program planning processes and shall be conducted at other times as appears appropriate to the Department of Community Development and Planning and the HSAC. Ad hoc committees of citizens may also be convened from time to time at the request of the City Manager or his delegate to assist the Administration in any phase of its Human Services Program planning.

## **B. The Department of Community Development and Planning.**

The Department of Community Development and Planning is responsible for performing the following tasks:

1. Administering City grant programs for the City of Cincinnati with nonprofit human services providers.
2. Entering into ongoing partnerships with public and private human services agencies, boards, commissions, and units of county, state and federal governments.
3. Maintaining fiscal accountability for program services receiving City human services support.
4. Developing: (a) Human Services goals and objectives; (b) the Human Services budget; and (c) long-range plans and innovative approaches for human services delivery.
5. Negotiating, monitoring, and evaluating City human services contracts and developing program specifications for services, which require bidding procedures (a Request for Proposals).
6. Providing: (a) technical assistance to agencies and communities in developing their program scope of services outcomes and adequately meeting the requirements of City contracts; and (b) orientation to agencies and communities concerning city policies and procedures for human services contracting.
7. Encouraging: (a) agencies to participate in evaluating jointly funded programs; (b) agencies to recognize and fill unmet needs; and (c) communities with unmet needs to develop linkages with appropriate agencies.
8. Recommending to the City Manager changes related to the City's Human Services Strategies regarding policy, programs, priorities, and services.
9. Providing staff support for City Citizen Advisory Committees.

### **C. Pre-application procedures**

1. The City should use its human services principles, funding criteria, program design, and implementation priorities as a framework for making grant awards.
2. Interested nonprofit organizations and agencies must submit an application to the City of Cincinnati Department of Community Development and Planning to receive a grant award as a result of the HSAC application and recommendation process. The Department of Community Development and Planning accepts grant applications for City General Fund Operating Grant (GFOG), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) programs. In addition to submitting other information that is specific to each grant program's application requirements, the applicant will also be required to provide:
  - Proof of the applicant's legal status as a nonprofit agency or organization.
  - Information about the agency's or organization's board of directors.
  - The most recent audit for the agency or organization (if an audit has been completed).
  - Certificates/binders for the agency's or organization's general liability and fidelity bond insurance coverage.
  - The agency's or organization's certificate of premium payment from the State of Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation.
  - A letter of support from the relevant community council in the neighborhood where services are to be provided.
  - The agency's or organization's long-range plan and most recent program evaluation or assessment (if such items exist).

Applicants should demonstrate how their service(s) will comply with the requirements of the Human Services Policy. Applicants must also provide to the City proposed outcomes for services to be provided with City funds and explain how they intend to attain the proposed outcomes.

3. If an applicant does not comply with the above outlined requirements and others that the Human Services Division may develop, the HSAC will not recommend that the applicant receive a grant. If the agency or organization is already under contract with the City and does not meet performance standards, its contract may not be renewed and may be terminated. Examples of agency or organization nonperformance include:
  - a. Inaccurate or chronically late submission of claim vouchers-invoices
  - b. Chronic failure to obtain proposed outcomes
  - c. Failure to document community participation and benefits to residents for community-based programs and services
  - d. Failure to comply with any City grant program requirements.

#### **D. Grant Application Process**

1. An agency or organization submitting an application or request for funds will be required to clearly describe the program or service that they intend to provide, so that the staff may determine its eligibility, compliance with the funding criteria, and appropriate funding level for the proposed program or service.
2. An agency or organization must apply separately to each grant program for which it is requesting City of Cincinnati grant funds.
3. An agency or organization must submit a full disclosure of its:
  - a. Budget,
  - b. Funding sources by program,
  - c. Table of organization which identifies all personnel by program, and
  - d. Documentation of problems, needs or conditions of the community/population it proposes to serve.
4. In some instances services, which are deemed needed by the citizens, will be put out for bid. Under this procedure, the Department of Community Development and Planning will advertise a standard Request for Proposals or contact appropriate agencies, which could operate such services. Department of Community Development and Planning staff and/or a selection committee will review applicant proposals. They will consider the applicant's fiscal and management capability, as well as other established criteria and award contracts accordingly.

## **E. Grant Application Review Process/ Timetable**

The Department of Community Development and Planning (DCDP) and Human Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) shall review grant applications and make recommendations to the City Manager. Beginning in the year 2000, grant program application processes shall begin in January, and be conducted biennially.

Provided below are steps of the grant application review process:

1. DCDP Orientation Meeting – Grant program information and applications are distributed to potential grant applicants.
2. Applicants submit grant applications by a designated deadline.
3. DCDP staff review applications that are eligible for consideration.
4. Applications are distributed to HSAC.
5. DCDP staff and HSAC conduct site visits and hold agency hearings with applicants.
6. HSAC holds its Public Hearing.
7. HSAC and Department of Community Development and Planning staff finalizes grant award recommendations.
8. Department of Community Development and Planning submits grant award recommendations to the Office of Budget and Evaluation.
9. City Council holds its budget hearings.
10. Final appropriating ordinance passed by City Council.
11. Contract period begins for grants.

## **F. Funding Allocation**

1. A minimum of 1.5 percent of the City of Cincinnati's General Fund revenue shall be allocated annually to the Department of Community Development and Planning to provide funds for Human Services Division program grants for service providers and support administrative costs for Human Services Division staff members. The administrative costs of HSD shall be limited to 15 percent of the allocation inclusive of fringe benefits.

2. Funds may be allocated annually from the Community Development Block Grant for capital improvements or the rehabilitation of human services facilities by nonprofit agencies or organizations. Such requests shall be submitted to the Human Services Advisory Committee. Grant award recommendations shall be approved by the Community Development Advisory Board. In special circumstances, CDBG funds may be used for operating expenses if allowed by the federal regulations.
3. Funds may be allocated annually from the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) program for operating expenses of shelters and transitional housing providers. ESG applications shall be submitted to the City's Department of Community Development and Planning for the Human Services Advisory Committee application review process.